**Highest share of women in Bihar police, 71% cases pending for more than 3 years in district courts, reveals India Justice Report 2025**

***Some encouraging improvements:***

* Bihar climbed up 3 spots to the 13th position in the overall ranking of states
* Improved ranking in Police, from the 16th to the 10th spot
* Improved ranking in legal aid, from 16th to the 12th position

***Persistent lacunae:***

* Bihar has the lowest per capita spend on police and judiciary
* 71% of cases in district courts pending for more than 3 years, the highest in the country

**15 April, Patna:** The 2025 India Justice Report (IJR), India’s only ranking of states on delivery of justice in the country, released today, ranks Bihar 13th overall (2022:16th), with it improving in Police (16th in 2022 to 10th this year) and Legal Aid (16th in 2022 to 12th this year) among the 18 Large and Mid-sized states (with population of over one crore each).

The top overall position was retained by Karnataka, followed by Andhra Pradesh, climbing from fifth in 2022 to second, Telangana (2022 ranking: 3rd), and Kerala (2022 ranking: 6th). Among the seven small states (with populations less than one crore each), Sikkim (2022: 1st) ranked first, followed by Himachal Pradesh (2022: 6th) and Arunachal Pradesh (2022: 2nd).

The India Justice Report (IJR) was first initiated by Tata Trusts, with the first ever ranking published in 2019. This is the fourth edition of the report, in collaboration with partners including the Centre for Social Justice, Common Cause, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, DAKSH, TISS–Prayas, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, and How India Lives, IJR’s data partner.

Through a rigorous 24-month quantitative research, the IJR 2025, similar to the previous three, has tracked the performance of states in **capacitating their Justice delivery structures** to effectively deliver mandated services. Based on the latest official statistics from authoritative government sources, it brings together otherwise siloed data on the **four pillars of Justice delivery – Police, Judiciary, Prisons, and Legal Aid**. Each pillar was analysed through the prism of budgets, human resources, workload, diversity, infrastructure, and trends (intention to improve over a five-year period), against the state’s own declared standards and benchmarks. This edition also separately assesses the capacity of the 25 State Human Rights Commissions (*see SHRC brief for more*) and consists of essays on mediation and access to justice for persons with disabilities.

Discussing the India Justice Report, **Justice (Retd.) Madan B. Lokur** commented, “*The punishing process of accessing justice begins with the very first encounter an individual has with the system. With our failure to properly equip and train frontline justice providers—police stations, legal aid actors including paralegal volunteers and district courts—we fracture public trust. These institutions are intended to embody our commitment to equal justice. The strength of our entire justice framework rests on these critical first points of contact. The fourth edition of the India Justice Report points out that improvements remain few and far between in the absence of adequate attention given to resources. Alas, the burden continues to remain on the individual seeking justice, and not the state to provide it*.”

**Ms. Maja Daruwala, Chief Editor, India Justice Report**, highlighted, “*As India moves forward into a hundred years of being a democratic, rule of law nation, the promise of rule of law and equal rights will remain hollow unless underwritten by a reformed justice system. Reform is not optional. It is urgent. A well-resourced responsive justice system is a constitutional imperative that must be experienced as an everyday reality available to every citizen*.”

**Bihar’s Ranks: Pillar Wise**

|  | **IJR 4** | **IJR 3** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **OVERALL** | **13** | 16 |
| **POLICE** | **10** | 16 |
| **PRISONS** | **12** | 9 |
| **JUDICIARY** | **15** | 16 |
| **LEGAL AID** | **12** | 16 |

**Bihar Police: Major Improvement since IJR 2022**

While Bihar continues to have the lowest per capita spend on police, since IJR 2022, the state doubled its spend on training per police personnel (from Rs. 10,994 in 2020-21 to Rs. 20,530 in 2022-23), making it the state with the highest spend. The share of training budget in total police budget thus improved 3x. However, utilisation of the training budget dropped significantly in the same period from 72% to 35%.

The state also has the highest share of women in the police (23.7%), 13% share of women in officers, and the highest share of women in constabulary (27%). It also slightly reduced its vacancies at both the constable (from 30% in 2022 to 23 % in 2023) and the officer level (from 54% to 45%). There was also a reduction in vacancies in the reserved positions for SC officers (49% to 42%), constables (10% to none), and OBC officers (42% to 32%).

All police stations in Bihar now have at least one CCTV camera and have significantly more police stations with women helpdesks (83%).

**Forensics: Plagued with High Vacancies**

The state of forensics requires immediate attention with very high vacancies in both administrative (78%) and scientific staff (85%).

**Prisons: Increase in Staff Vacancies Result in Slight Fall**

With an increase in vacancies in officer positions (29%), cadre staff (45%), as well as correctional staff (49%) in prisons, the state’s rank slipped to the 12th position this year. The state, however, has the second highest share of women in prison staff (22%) after Karnataka, and all its jails are equipped with video conferencing facilities.

**Legal Aid: Slow but Welcome Uptick**

At Rs. 3.5, Bihar spends the second lowest per capita on legal aid after West Bengal. Over the past 2 years, it, however, did increase the number of legal service clinics in villages as well as jails. The Permanent as well as SLSA Lok Adalats recorded no cases for the year 2023-24.

**Judiciary: High Vacancy in High Courts**

The High Court of Patna faces high vacancies with 36% vacancy in judges and 40% in staff. Only 3% of the High Court judges are women. At the district court level, there’s a 24% vacancy rate among judges and the state hasn’t been able to completely fill any of its reserved caste quotas. 71% of cases in the district courts are pending for more than 3 years. Bihar also has the lowest per capita spend on judiciary (Rs.101) among all large states.

The IJR 2025 has reiterated both immediate and foundational corrections. It has flagged urgent filling of vacancies and increased representation. To effect irreversible change, it has exhorted that Justice delivery be designated as an essential service.

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**Sources:**

1. Police: *Data on Police Organisation 2023,* Bureau of Police Research and Development
2. *Prisons: Prison Statistics India 2022,* National Crime Records Bureau
3. Judiciary: 2024 & 2025- National Judicial Data Grid (NJDG), Court News, Supreme Court of India; eCourts Services; Websites and annual reports of High Courts, Department of Justice
4. Legal aid: 2024, Statistics from National Legal Services Authority

**ANNEXURE I:**

**OVERALL NATIONAL FINDINGS: AT A GLANCE**

**The ranking of the 18 large-and mid-sized states is:**

| **State** | **Rank 2025** | **Rank 2022** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Karnataka | 1 | 1 |
| Andhra Pradesh | 2 | 5 |
| Telangana | 3 | 3 |
| Kerala | 4 | 6 |
| Tamil Nadu | 5 | 2 |
| Chhattisgarh | 6 | 9 |
| Madhya Pradesh | 7 | 8 |
| Odisha | 8 | 11 |
| Punjab | 9 | 10 |
| Maharashtra | 10 | 12 |
| Gujarat | 11 | 4 |
| Haryana | 12 | 13 |
| Bihar | 13 | 16 |
| Rajasthan | 14 | 15 |
| Jharkhand | 15 | 7 |
| Uttarakhand | 16 | 14 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 17 | 18 |
| West Bengal | 18 | 17 |

**The ranking of the seven small states is:**

| **State** | **Rank 2025** | **Rank 2022** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sikkim | 1 | 1 |
| Himachal Pradesh | 2 | 6 |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 3 | 2 |
| Tripura | 4 | 3 |
| Meghalaya | 5 | 4 |
| Mizoram | 6 | 5 |
| Goa | 7 | 7 |











| ***BUDGETS FOR JUSTICE AT A GLANCE***   * **Legal Aid:** The national per capita spend on legal aid, is a meagre **Rs 6** per annum * **Prisons:** The national per capita spend on prisons is **Rs. 57**. In 2022-23, the national average spend per prisoner has increased to Rs 44,110 from Rs 38,028 in 2021-22 Andhra Pradesh records the highest annual spend on a prisoner at Rs.2,67,673. * **Judiciary:** The national per capita spend on judiciary stands at **Rs. 182.** No state spends more than one per cent of its total annual expenditure on the Judiciary.      * **Police:** The national per capita spend on police is at **Rs. 1,275** which is the highest among the four pillars. |
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